1: Gwinde--1093 E-5 (1918-1924) 1937 S196 Yahgan S98

/1093 cont./

Supplementary data on their religious activity will be given in the description of their great funeral rite, which follows in the next section.

B. Belief in the Soul and Mourning

Conceptions of the human soul and of its continued life after death are closely interwoven, and the customs of mourning, for which our Yamana have created definite forms, are connected with them. The latter are probably based principally on the fact that the loss of each tribal member affects all the natives very painfully. In the following description one must keep in mind that European ideas and expressions do not absolutely coincide in every detail with the thoughts and words of the natives because the latter are much more unpretentious and poorer in ideas. Much of their thinking shows gaps and is not carried to its conclusion. In general it is not the habit of the Fuegian to complete what is lacking or to provide a suitable substitute. In view of this the investigator runs the risk of consciously or unconsciously substituting his own interpretation for the deficient forms of expression of the children of nature, which would give a distorted picture. My informants were sometimes at a loss to give satisfactory explanations in response to my questions and inquiries. This is the typical primitive mentality which does not concern itself with precise descriptions of every image and complete interpretations of every idea according to the rules of logic. It must be frankly admitted that there are gaps in the following account. I would be guilty of distorting the material offered if I were to fill them out according to my own taste and provide them with meanings from my personal opinion. Unadulterated single facts, even though they are deficient and fragmentary, can be used in making comparisons and will safely lead to the desired goal, whereas unreliable and arbitrary additions imperil the course of research.

/1299 cont./

787 farther and finally disappeared completely. "...All this Marocha told me and wept and sobbed as she did so. Then she took three little baskets which she had made the day before and handed them to me, saying: 'Take these little baskets. If I should really die soon, I could not give you anything any more. I would rather you take these little baskets and keep them!' I took the little baskets. On the afternoon of the same day Marocha felt very ill, she was stricken with fever and the next morning she was dead. All this happened just as I told it to you!" Each word had the tone of utter conviction.

The halɣwɨ́pisa mentioned above is to be explained as follows. This /1300/ is the common name of the mighty blue whale, Balaenoptera schlegelii (p. 36 /unrevealed/). This Tom, Marocha's brother, had died long before her conversation with Nelly, he came to his sister Marocha in a dream. It is said of him: One day, as he was walking along the shore, a halɣwɨ́pisa emerged from the water and for some time kept staring at Tom. Tom died that same year; the halɣwɨ́pisa took along his kénpif. From that time on the two were [somehow] connected. Tom, accompanied by that halɣwɨ́pisa, appeared to his sister Marocha in a dream. On this occasion halɣwɨ́pisa took her kénpif along, just as he had previously taken the kénpif of Tom. That is why Marocha died soon after her dream in which, actually, halɣwɨ́pisa carried her off. This strange interpretation must be regarded, according to the principles of the medicine men, as an isolated case. Accordingly, it does not run counter to the general conception of the kénpif, the human soul after death.

It is the individual person himself who more or less enlivens his dream image, giving it greater or lesser significance. He likes to attribute reality to those images that give him a vision of the future. Conjectures and forebodings that first appeared as dreams and afterward came to pass in some way strengthen him anew in his belief and increase his confidence in dreams.

2. Superstitious Ideas

•811

In the simple mental life of the Fuegians there is no lack of certain views and opinions which must be regarded as true

/1:304 cont./

superstition in the strictest sense of the word. No one will find this surprising. An attempt to offer an explanation or a reason for the many taboos and customs would be tantamount to robbing them of their superstitious character. They simply exist and one acts accordingly. I shall list here the considerable number of superstitious ideas by which our Yamana are governed in individual instances, including a few magical practices. The superstitions mentioned above in the section on the care of infants and children and in connection with the description of the material culture of the Yamana will not be repeated, and the belief in the various groups of spirits and individual fantasy images will not be discussed. A few earlier observers have noted that the Yamana are easily tempted to superstition (263).

263. Fitz-Roy (x):190 writes, and Darwin (f):I, 223 agrees: "The natives whom I carried to England often amused us by their superstitious ideas, which showed, nevertheless, that their ideas were not limited by the visible world. If any thing was said or done that was wrong, in their opinion it was certain to cause bad weather. Even shooting young birds, before they were able to fly, was thought a heinous offence. I remember York Minster saying one day to Mr. Bynoe, when he had shot some young ducks with the old bird: 'Oh, Mr. Bynoe, very bad to shoot little duck -- come wind -- come rain -- blow -- very much blow'" /cited in English/. Lovisato (bj):149 expresses himself in more general terms: "They are superstitious; they fear the wind and perhaps regard the elements in general as vindictive agents" /translated from Italian/. Hyades (q):253 also writes in this vein and asserts (q):387 that the efforts of the Anglican missionaries did not change anything concerning the superstitions of the Yamana: "The superstitions are the same as in former times"

1. Gusinde—1169 0-0 (1919-1920) 1937 5146 Yahgan 5146

/1,000 word./

B1 /translated from French/. Cooper:159, on the basis of the few data available to him at the time, surmised correctly: "Superstitions exist, but apparently in moderate number only" /cited in English/. Even now this judgment need not be changed.

/1,001/

a. Superstitions Believed to the Animal Kingdom

B5 The Fuegian is very dependent on the animals of his homeland. Hence it is not strange that they play a dominant role in his superstitious ideas.

B5 If at night a dog howls miserably for any length of time, its master interprets it as presaging all kinds of dire prospects for himself or for a proposed undertaking, such as a hunt, a journey, and important work. If all the dogs howl in the few huts that form a camp, an epidemic or at least serious illness among many persons is to be expected. If the howling of many dogs has lasted for some time, all the people come out of their huts and hurl everything at hand toward heaven, things such as stones and pieces of lumber, tools and weapons, and preferably hot ashes and glowing logs. Meanwhile no one, with the exception of half-grown children, may stay in bed or rest. Everyone must be up and about until dawn. All night long everyone is very excited and behaves wildly. They wave their arms about in extreme agitation, they thrust their arms forward and upward with hands outspread and cry from constricted throats tetete... All this is supposed to ward off the menacing illness.

When people are sitting out in the open in front of their huts, it sometimes happens that a dog comes crawling up to a person, dragging himself along the ground, stretched out on all fours, and pushing himself forward on his belly. They interpret this to mean that the person himself or someone among his intimate family will soon die.

B5 In contrast to the Selk'nam (Vol. I, 707), our Yamana are neither friendly to the fox nor kindly disposed toward it, because it preys on human carcasses. The following story is told. When